Programs Branch

User Report

EDMONTON VICTIMIZATION SURVEY (1985)

FINDINGS AND PRELIMINARY COMPARISONS OF 1982 AND 1985 DATA

VOLUME I

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Introduction

In 1985 the Ministry of the Solicitor General, with the assistance of Statistics Canada, carried out a one-city replication of the Canadian Urban Victimization Survey (1982)[1] in Edmonton, Alberta. Almost 10,000 residents of Edmonton aged 16 years and older were interviewed about their experience with crime in the preceeding year, their perceptions of the criminal justice system, and the impact criminal victimization may have had upon them. The methodology and questions used in the survey were virtually identical to the CUVS (1982)[2] making it possible to trace patterns in risk of victimization, reported and unreported crime, the extent and distribution of certain crimes, and victims' perceptions of crime and the criminal justice system.

Telephone interviews were used for both the 1982 and the 1985 surveys. Extensive pretests had established that data collected over the telephone were comparable to data collected by the far more costly method of in-person interviews. Statistical estimates for the population 16 and older in Edmonton were made on the basis of these interviews and it is these population estimates that are used throughout this analysis.

Victimization surveys can give us information about most, but not all types of crimes which are of major concern to the general public. Crimes such as murder, kidnapping, and "victimless crimes" cannot be captured using survey techniques, and were therefore excluded. Residents without telephones were excluded from this survey as were residents of institutions such as hospitals, prisons and psychiatric centres. Crimes against businesses were also excluded.

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(1) The Canadian Urban Victimization Survey (CUVS) was conducted in 1982 in seven major urban centres: Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax-Dartmouth and St. John's. The findings have been published in a series of Bulletins available from the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

(2) Throughout this report the year in which the survey was conducted is reported - hence Edmonton(1985). The victimization incidents, however, are always for the calender year preceeding the survey.

The eight categories of crimes included in this survey are: sexual assault, robbery, assault, break and entry, motor vehicle theft, theft of household property, theft of personal property, and vandalism. These offences are ranked in descending order of seriousness.

1. Sexual assault includes rape, attempted rape, molesting or attempted molestation, and is considered the most serious crime.

2. Robbery occurs if something is taken and the offender has a weapon or there is a threat or an attack. The presence of a weapon is assumed to imply a threat. Attempted robberies are also included in this offence category.

3. Assault involves the presence of a weapon or an attack or threat. Assault incidents may range from face-to-face verbal threats to an attack with extensive injuries.

4. Break and enter occurs if a dwelling is entered by someone who has no right to be there. "No right to be there" differentiates, for example, between a workman who is in a dwelling with the permission of the owner and steals something, and someone illegally entering the dwelling to take property. The latter would be classified as a break and enter as are attempts to enter a dwelling if there is some evidence of force or knowledge of how the person tried to get in.

5. Motor vehicle theft involves the theft or attempted theft of a car, truck, van, motorcycle or other motor vehicle.

6. Theft or attempted theft of household property.

7. Theft or attempted theft of money or other personal property (not household property).

8. Vandalism occurs if property is damaged but not taken.

Incidents which involved the commission of several different criminal acts appear in the tables only once, according to the most serious component of the event. Thus for example, if sexual assault, theft of money and vandalism all occurred at the same time, the incident would be classified in these tables as sexual assault. An incident would be classified as vandalism (least serious on the hierarchy) only if no other crime which is higher on the seriousness scale occurred at the same time.

Analyses in this report are based on the general offence categories outlined above. At a later date analyses will include more refined distinctions between and within offence categories according to other factors such as: whether the incident was attempted or completed, the amount of damage, injury or financial loss incurred, the response of victims, the location and time of offence, and characteristics of victims. Where appropriate, comparisons have been made with the findings of the CUVS (1982) although statistical significance tests are shown only for a few comparisons. Further analysis will determine the reliability of trends shown over time.

Risk of Victimization

The EVS (1985) uncovered an estimated 116,000 incidents of crime in the 1984 calendar year: 48,400 personal victimizations of persons over 16 and older (sexual assault, robbery, assault and theft of personal property) and 67,600 household victimizations (break and enter, motor vehicle theft, household theft and vandalism) (Table 1). This is a drop of 15% from the 135,800 incidents estimated to have occurred in 1981 in Edmonton (Table 1a). However, the pattern of offences remained unchanged. The most common type of incident was theft of household property followed by theft of personal property and assault. There were relatively few incidents of sexual assault, robbery or motor vehicle theft.

Property crime rates show a dramatic and significant decline of between 15% and 28% over the three year period. Although sexual assault shows a significant decline of 48% the rate for all violent crimes taken together remained unchanged (see Appendix I for a discussion of the statistical tests used). These declines in the crime rates are also evident in the official (U.C.R.) statistics which reflect a marginal increase of 4.5% in the rate of violent crimes and a decrease of 16% in the property crime rate over the same time period. As will be seen later, the reporting rate did not change markedly over the period in question (the only exception was an increase in the reporting of sexual assault incidents). The decline in crime rates, therefore, is not an artifact of shifts in reporting patterns but reflects a decrease in the types of criminal victimizations surveyed in Edmonton.

The 1985 findings were consistent with those from 1982 in showing considerable differences between men and women in risk of personal victimization. Women made up the large majority of sexual assault victims, while men were almost twice as likely as women to be victims of robbery or assault. The risk of having personal property stolen was similar for men and women. Also consistent with the 1982 results are the findings that the risk of personal victimization is closely tied to age. The highest rate of victimization in personal offences was for those under 25 with these rates declining rapidly with age (Table 2). The small number of personal victimizations against elderly people and the small number of sexual assaults against most age categories did not allow us to make statistically reliable population estimates by age categories.

TABLE 1

Estimated Incident Rates (Edmonton 1985)

Population aged 16 and older in Edmonton = 420,000
Males = 208,000
Females = 212,000

PERSONAL OFFENCES

Type of Incident	Estimated Incidents	Rates per 1,000 Population		
		Total	Males	Females
All Personal Incidents	48,400	115	130	101
All Violent Incidents	26,400	63	80	46
Sexual Assault	1,000	2.3	**	3.8
Robbery	3,900	9	13	6
Assault	21,500	51	66	37
Personal Theft	22,000	52	50	54

Total households in Edmonton = 212,700

HOUSEHOLD OFFENCES

Type of Incident	Estimated Incidents	Rate per 1,000 households
All Household Incidents	67,600	317
Break and Enter	15,600	73
Motor Vehicle Theft	3,200	15
Household Theft	34,800	163
Vandalism	14,000	66

** The actual count was too low to make statistically reliable population estimates.

TABLE 1a

Estimated Incident Rates (Edmonton 1982)

Population aged 16 and older in Edmonton = 404,000
Males = 188,000
Females = 216,000

PERSONAL OFFENCES

Type of Incident	Estimated Incidents	Rates per 1,000 Population		
		Total	Males	Females
All Personal Incidents	57,800	142	167	120
All Violent Incidents	28,700	70	93	50
Sexual Assault	1,700	4.1	**	6.5
Robbery	3,800	9	12	7
Assault	23,200	57	80	38
Personal Theft	29,100	72	74	70

Total households in Edmonton = 199,000

HOUSEHOLD OFFENCES

Type of Incident	Estimated Incidents	Rate per 1,000 households
All Household Incidents	78,000	393
Break and Enter	17,000	86
Motor Vehicle Theft	3,400	17
Household Theft	40,600	204
Vandalism	17,000	86

** The actual count was too low to make statistically reliable population estimates.

Table 2

Incident Rates per Thousand Population by Age (Edmonton 1985)

	16-24	25-39	40-64	65 and over
Sexual Assault	5*	**	**	**
Robbery	17	10	3*	**
Assault	96	58	12	**
Personal Theft	85	55	30	**

* The actual count was low (11 to 20), therefore caution should be exercised when interpreting this rate.

** The actual count was too low to make statistically reliable population estimates.

In order to increase the practical utility of these data to the Edmonton police, the data were regrouped by policing Divisions. The four policing Divisions are shown in Appendix II. One important consideration in analysing victimization data at this level is victim mobility, i.e., the movement of people from the suburbs to the centre core during working hours and again in the evening for "high risk" activities such as going to bars. Thus, victimization will not necessarily occur in the area of the victim's residence. Ideally, two sets of tables would be compiled, one showing incidence by area of occurrence and another by area of residence of victims. Similarly, incident rates would be based on estimated number of incidents per 1,000 population and per 1,000 households in the Division of occurrence and the Division in which the victim resides, respectively. In producing these data, however, several problems were encountered which do not permit, at this time, the presentation of incident data occurring in each police Division. While this analysis is forthcoming, general findings from the 1982 survey will be used to provide expected directions for the 1985 data. Tables 3 and 4 summarize the trends for residents of each of the policing areas in Edmonton.

Table 3

Estimated Incidents by Police Division (Place of Residence), 1982 and 1985

Type of Incident	Police Divisions											
	A			B			C			D		
	(1982)	(1985)	% Diff.	(1982)	(1985)	% Diff.	(1982)	(1985)	% Diff.	(1982)	(1985)	% Diff.
Sexual Assault **												
Robbery	600*	1,500	+150	1,200	1,000	-17	1,300	700	-46	700	700*	0
Assault	6,000	5,900	-2	6,500	6,300	-3	8,400	6,700	-20	2,300	2,400	+4
Total Personal Violent	7,300	7,800	+7	8,000	7,400	-7	9,900	7,700	-22	3,400	3,300	-3
Personal Theft	7,600	6,300	-17	8,300	5,400	-35	10,400	7,200	-31	2,900	2,900	0
Total Personal Crimes	14,900	14,100	-5	16,300	12,800	-21	20,300	14,900	-27	6,300	6,200	-2
Break and Enter	4,800	4,200	-12	5,100	5,700	+12	5,600	4,200	-25	1,400	1,400	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	1,000	1,000	0	1,200	900	-25	900	1,000	-11	300*	**	--
Household Theft	11,000	9,500	-14	11,900	11,400	-4	14,800	11,100	-25	2,800	2,400	-14
Vandalism	4,900	3,900	-20	5,300	4,200	-20	5,500	4,700	-14	1,200	1,100	-8
Total Household Crimes	21,700	18,600	-14	23,500	22,200	-5	26,800	21,000	-22	5,700	5,100	-10

* The actual count was low (11 to 20) therefore caution should be exercised when interpreting this rate.
** The actual counts were too low to make statistically reliable population estimates for each Division.

Table 4

Estimated Incident Rates by Police Division (Place of Residence), 1982 and 1985

Type of Incident	Police Divisions											
	A			B			C			D		
	(1982)	(1985)	% Diff.	(1982)	(1985)	% Diff.	(1982)	(1985)	% Diff.	(1982)	(1985)	% Diff.
Sexual Assault **												
Robbery	5*	13	+160	11	9	-18	8	4	-50	27	29*	+7
Assault	52	50	-4	60	53	-12	54	43	-20	69	102	+15
Total Personal Violent	63	66	+5	74	63	-15	63	49	-22	133	139	+4
Personal Theft	66	54	-18	76	46	-40	67	46	-31	111	121	+9
Total Personal Crimes	129	120	-7	150	109	-27	130	95	-27	244	260	+7
Break and Enter	85	69	-19	100	101	-1	75	53	-29	96	95	-1
Motor Vehicle Theft	17	17	0	23	16	-30	12	13	+8	21*	**	--
Household Theft	195	157	-19	231	202	-12	197	141	-28	186	160	-14
Vandalism	87	65	-25	104	74	-29	73	59	-19	82	71	-13
Total Household Crimes	384	308	-20	458	393	-14	357	266	-25	385	341	-11

* The actual count was low (11 to 20) therefore caution should be exercised when interpreting this rate.
** The actual counts were too low to make statistically reliable population estimates for each Division.

The 1982 findings for Edmonton reveal that residents of Divisions A, B and C experienced a greater number of incidents than actually occurred in these areas, while a higher number of incidents occurred in Division D (the centre core) than were recorded by residents living in that area. This substantiates the hypothesis that much crime in the downtown core of urban areas is against people who come downtown to work, shop or play. Personal crimes in particular occurred in 1981 in Division D at a rate per 1,000 population of approximately four times the rate shown in other areas.

While the residents of Division D appear to be at greater risk of personal victimization than those in other Divisions (their rates in 1982 and in 1985 were about twice as high) it is interesting to note that the rates for household crimes were more evenly divided among the four areas. Residents of Division B had the highest rate of break and enter, household theft and vandalism.

The demographic composition of Division D helps to explain the high rate of personal victimization of its residents. A consistent finding of the CUVS, now confirmed by the EVS, is that young single people, particularly males, and who spent many evenings outside the home each month, experienced a higher rate of victimization than others. The EVS shows that in 1985, although the population in Divison D was evenly split between males and females, a higher proportion of residents in this area were under 25 years of age and single than in were those in other areas (see Appendix III). We would thus expect rates of personal victimization to be comparatively higher for residents of this area.

On a more practical level, these findings raise several issues important to police resource deployment for the investigation of incidents, to crime classification and the establishment of crime patterns in each Division, to crime analysis with the potential distortion of crime rates, and to the treatment of the victim by the police. This is an important area for further investigation particularly with respect to meeting the needs of victims.

Reported and Unreported Crime

Consistent with the findings of the 1982 survey, less than half (41%) of all the incidents occurring in Edmonton in 1984 came to the attention of the police. As with the CUVS, the proportion of incidents not reported to the police varied according to the type of offence (Table 5). While the reporting rate of violent offences increased marginally, from 32% to 34% overall the proportion of sexual assault incidents reported to the police increased dramatically from 15% to 39%. Due to the small number of actual sexual asault cases described to interviewers in both surveys, this change must be viewed with caution. Nevertheless, coupled with the overall improvement in public perceptions of the police, especially in enforcing laws and supplying crime prevention information (see Tables 8 and 9), these findings suggest increased confidence among victims of sexual assault that they will receive appropriate and sensitive treatment from the police and decreased reticence to involve themselves in the criminal justice process.

Using the 1982 data it appears that crimes occurring in each Division are equally likely to come to the attention of the police, the only exception being that vandalism in Division D is less likely to be reported than vandalism occurring in other areas. It was the residents of Division D, however, who were the least likely to report victimizations (Table 6). In particular, it appears that the residents of the downtown core are very much more reticent than other Edmonton residents to report incidents of break and enter.

Table 5

Proportion of Incidents Reported to Police (Edmonton 1982, 1985)

Type of Incident	Percent Reported	
	1982	1985
Sexual Assault	15	39*
Robbery	46	42
Assault	32	32
Break and Enter	62	62
Motor Vehicle Theft	77	68
Personal Theft	30	28
Household Theft	46	44
Vandalism	39	33
All Incidents	42	41

* The actual count was low (11 to 20), therefore caution is advised when interpreting this proportion.

Table 6

Proportion of Incidents Not Reported to Police by Police Division (Place of Residence), 1982 and 1985

Type of Incident	Police Divisions							
	A		B		C		D	
	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)
Personal Violent	66	70	59	65	70	65	78	65
Personal Theft	70	68	67	72	73	75	67	72
Total Personal Crimes	68	69	63	68	71	70	73	68
Break and Enter	38	37	41	34	32	39	45	50
Motor Vehicle Theft	**	69*	**	34*	**	30*	**	**
Household Theft	54	53	53	56	53	56	55	60
Vandalism	58	68	60	65	64	67	65	64
Total Household Crimes	50	51	50	51	50	54	52	57
Total	58	59	56	57	59	60	63	63

* The actual count was low (11 to 20), therefore caution should be exercised when interpreting this proportion.
** The actual count was too low to make statistically reliable population estimates.

Comparing findings from the 1982 and 1985 surveys reveals that a greater proportion of personal crimes but a smaller proportion of household offences came to the attention of the police in 1984.

In the EVS an additional question asked of those who had reported their victimization experience to the police was why they had decided to do so. As to be expected, victims of violence and victims of property offences expressed different reasons. Wanting the offender arrested was most often cited by victims of violence (67%) followed by the desire to ensure personal protection against further victimization. Victims of property crimes, on the other hand, were as interested in having their property returned (70%) as they were in having the offender arrested. It is interesting to note that only one-quarter of the victims of property crimes were looking to the police to obtain advice on preventing future victimizations (see Table 7).

The two most common reasons for not reporting both violent and property offences to the police were that victims perceived the incident to be "too minor" (72%), and that the police couldn't do anything about it (64%). Victims of violent crime were more likely than victims of property offences to perceive the incident to be a personal matter and of no concern to the police, to fear revenge by the offender, to want to protect the offender, and to express concern about the attitudes of police or courts toward the incident. Thirty percent of all victims who did not involve the police said that to do so would be "too inconvenient" (see Table 8).

TABLE 7

Reasons for Reporting Incidents to Police by Category of Offence (Edmonton 1985)

	All Crimes	Violent Crimes	Property Crimes
Wanted the offender arrested	67	70	67
Wanted stolen items recovered	64	19	70
To receive personal protection	22	46	19
To get advice on how to prevent being victimized again	24	40	22
To file a report to claim insurance or compensation	50	12*	56

* The actual count was low (11 to 20), therefore caution is advised when interpreting this proportion.

TABLE 8

Reasons for Not Reporting Incidents to Police by Category of Offence (Edmonton 1985)

	All Crimes	Violent Crimes	Property Crimes
Nothing was taken	20	25	18
Police couldn't do anyting about it	64	55	66
Fear of revenge by the offender	4	17	2
Wanted to protect the offender	6	18	3
Too minor	72	66	74
Too inconvenient	30	30	30
Personal matter	12	32	7
Reported to another official	12	11	12
Concern about attitudes of police or courts	10	15	8

Perceptions of the Level of Crime in Edmonton

Respondents to the EVS were asked a number of questions concerning their perceptions of crime and the degree of safety they felt while walking alone in their neighbourhoods during the day and after dark? The perceptions of Edmonton residents in 1985 differed very little from responses to the same questions in the 1982 survey.

Overall, Edmonton residents perceived the level of crime in 1985 in their own neighbourhoods to be low (60%) and stable (58%) (Tables 9 and 10). Very few (6%) described their neighbourhoods as high crime areas, and 17% expressed the belief that crime in their neighbourhoods had increased in the past few years. Those who had been victimized during the survey reference year were more likely to perceive crime in their neighbourhoods to be high and rising than those who had not been victimized.

Only 10% of the population of Edmonton were of the opinion that the crime problem in their neighbourhood was serious (Table 11). Although victims were twice as likely (16%) as non-victims (7%) to express this opinion, the majority of victims (80%) still did not perceive that there was a serious crime problem.

Most of those surveyed felt that their own neighbourhood had less crime (63%) or about the same as the rest of Edmonton (22%) (Table 12). Again, victims were twice as likely as non-victims to feel that their neighbourhood had more crime than others, although the proportion of victims who gave this opinion remained low (10%).

Despite the positive perceptions Edmonton residents have of the level of crime in their immediate surroundings, over one-half (56%) responded that city-wide crime had increased over the past two years with only a slight difference in opinion between victims (59%) and non-victims (54%) (Table 13).

TABLE 9

Perceptions of the Level of Crime in own Neighbourhood by Population and by Victim Status (Edmonton 1985)

	Percent Distribution		
Amount of Crime	Population	Non-Victims	Victims
High	6	4	10
Average	27	24	36
Low	60	65	49
Don't Know	7	7	5
TOTAL	100	100	100

TABLE 10

Perceptions of Crime Trends over past Two Years in own Neighbourhood by Population and by Victim Status (Edmonton 1985)

	Percent Distribution		
Crime Change	Population	Non-Victims	Victims
Increased	17	13	25
Decreased	9	9	9
Remained the Same	58	60	52
Don't Know	16	17	14
TOTAL	100	100	100

TABLE 11

Perceptions of Crime Problem in Own Neighbourhood by Population and by Victim Status (Edmonton 1985)

	Percent Distribution		
Crime Problem	Population	Non-Victims	Victims
Serious	10	7	16
Not Serious	85	88	80
Don't Know	5	5	4
TOTAL	100	100	100

TABLE 12

Perceptions of Neighbourhood Crime Compared to all of Edmonton by Population and by Victim Status (Edmonton 1985)

	Percent Distribution		
Amount of Crime	Population	Non-Victims	Victims
More(1)	6	5	10
Same	22	20	26
Less(2)	63	66	59
Don't Know	8	10	5
TOTAL	100	100	100

(1) Combines "much more" and "more" categories.
(2) Combines "much less" and "less" categories.

Consistent with the CUVS (1982) and victimization surveys in the United States and Britain is the finding that the vast majority of Edmonton residents (96%) felt "very safe" or "reasonably safe" in 1985 walking alone in their own neighbourhoods during the day (Table 14). A considerable majority of people (61%) also felt safe walking alone in their own neighbourhoods after dark. Preliminary analysis showed no discernable difference in fear of crime between those who had been victims of crime and those who had not. Variations by specific type of victmization experience will be investigated at a later date.

On a Divisional level, there were wide variations among residents in their perceptions of crime, most noticeably between residents of Division D and others. Residents of the city's centre core were more likely than others to perceive the level of crime in their neighbourhoods to be high (18%), although this perception had dropped from 25% in 1982 (Table A3). Since 1982, Edmonton residents appear to feel that the rise in the crime has been stemmed. In 1985, only 17% felt that crime in their neighbourhood had increased as compared to 31% in 1982. In fact, 67% felt that crime had actually decreased or stayed the same (Table A4). Although 56 % of residents felt that crime in the city of Edmonton had increased it is important to note that, in 1982, fully 90% felt that crime in Edmonton had increased (Table A7).

While only 10% of Edmonton residents overall stated that the crime problem in their neighbourhood was serious, one-third of Division D residents considered their neighbourhood crime problem to be serious, both in 1982 and 1985 (Table A5). Furthermore, the majority of Division D residents believed that their own neighbourhood had the same or more crime than others. The opposite was true of the other Divisions (Table A6).

Given that crime rates are shown to be higher in Division D and that these residents perceive crime in their neighbourhoods to be serious and higher than do residents of other Divisions, it is not surprising that residents of the centre core were more likely to feel unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhoods both during the day (8%) and at night (52%) than residents of other areas of the city (3%; 37%) (Table A8).

TABLE 13

Perceptions of Crime Trends over past Two Years in Edmonton by Population and by Victim Status (Edmonton 1985)

	Percent Distribution		
Crime Change	Population	Non-Victims	Victims
Increased	56	54	59
Decreased	18	19	16
Remained the Same	16	16	17
Don't Know	9	10	7
TOTAL	100	100	100

TABLE 14

Feelings of Safety Walking Alone in own Neighbourhood During the Day and After Dark by Population and by Victim Status (Edmonton 1985)

	Percent Distribution		
	Population	Non-Victims	Victims
During Day			
Safe(1)	96	96	97
Unsafe(2)	3	3	3
	100	100	100
After Dark			
Safe(1)	61	61	62
Unsafe(2)	37	37	38
	100	100	100

(1) Combines "very safe" and "reasonably safe" categories.
(2) Combines "very unsafe" and "somewhat unsafe" categories.

Perceptions of the Police

All respondents to the 1982 and 1985 surveys were asked a series of questions designed to evaluate their perceptions of the police in their community. Generally speaking, citizens of Edmonton gave the police a favourable rating both in 1982 and 1985 on their performance in enforcing laws, responding promptly to calls, being approachable and in supplying information on ways to reduce crime (Table 15). While it would appear that less satisfaction is expressed regarding the ability to respond promptly to calls, this is largely because relatively few citizens had occasion to call the police in an urgent situation, thus almost one-fifth of victims indicated that they could not answer the question. Overall, Edmonton residents' perceptions of the police in 1985 show an improvement over 1982. This is particularly true regarding their perceptions on the ability of the police to supply crime prevention information.

Victims of crime who had reported their victimization to the police were also asked to rate the police on the way in which they handled the case. Victims generally rated the police favourably on responding promptly (66%) and on courtesy (71%) (Table 16). Victims were much less likely, however, to state that the police did a good job of keeping them informed on the progress or outcome of the case, which no doubt brought down their assessment of overall case handling since an ill-informed victim may well perceive a lack of progress or indeed a lack of interest in the case.

A finding that may cause some concern is that victims were less favourable about the way the Edmonton police handled cases in 1985 than they were in 1982 (See Table 16). It may be that over this three year period the increased awareness of victims' rights stimulated by the victims' movement has raised victims' expectations of the police on all levels, but particularily with respect to keeping victims informed of the progress of the case. Only slight variation is shown among police divisions on these measures (Tables A9 and A10).

TABLE 15

Perceptions of Police Performance by Population and by Victim Status (Edmonton 1982, 1985)

What kind of job do you think the local police force is doing:

Percent Distribution

	Population		Non-Victims		Victims	
	1982	1985	1982	1985	1982	1985
Enforcing Laws						
Good	55	61	58	62	51	59
Average	33	29	31	28	37	32
Poor	5	4	4	3	8	6
Don't Know	6	5	7	7	5	2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
Responding Promptly to Calls						
Good	44	47	44	46	44	49
Average	20	18	19	16	20	22
Poor	10	8	7	7	15	11
Don't Know	26	27	30	31	21	18
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
Being Approachable						
Good	62	65	62	65	60	65
Average	18	18	17	16	20	21
Poor	6	5	4	4	9	8
Don't Know	15	12	17	15	11	7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
Supplying Crime Prevention Information						
Good	53	63	54	63	50	61
Average	22	19	20	18	24	21
Poor	11	6	10	5	14	8
Don't Know	14	12	15	14	12	9
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

TABLE 16

Victims' Perceptions of Police Case Handling (Edmonton 1982, 1985)

	Aspects of Police Behaviour							
	Percent Distribution							
Victims' Rating	Promptness		Courtesy		Keeping Victim Informed		Overall Case Handling	
	1982	1985	1982	1985	1982	1985	1982	1985
Good	71	66	82	71	53	50	63	58
Average	16	19	14	24	23	19	23	25
Poor	13	14	4	5	24	31	15	16
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Awareness of Crime Prevention Programs

Awareness of community crime prevention programs increased markedly in Edmonton between 1982 and 1985. The findings of the EVS show that a full 94% of residents had some awareness of the Block Parent program, 91% had heard of Neighbourhood Watch and 65% were aware of Operation Identification (Table 17). Since 1982, major gains have been made in increasing people's awareness of crime prevention programs, particularly Neighbourhood Watch and Operation Identification. In all cases, victims were more likely to be aware of these programs than non-victims. Increasing awareness of the programs has also resulted in increased participation. The proportion of households actually participating in Operation Identification increased from 14% in 1982 to 20% in 1985. Those who had been victimized in the survey reference year were slightly more likely to be participating than those who had not. These findings suggest that although the experience of being the victim of a crime increases awareness of the existence of crime prevention programs, it does not necessarily lead to greater participation.

Relative to other areas of Edmonton, Division D seems to require special targetting by those involved with the implementation of community crime prevention programs. Divisional comparisons reveal that, in all cases, residents of Division D were much less likely than residents of other areas to be aware of these community crime prevention programs and they were half as likely as other residents to be participating in Operation Identification in 1985 (11% vs 20%) as were residents of other areas (20%) (Table A11).

Awareness of "Crime Stoppers"

Along with a number of other North American cities, the city of Edmonton has recently instituted a "Crime Stoppers" program. The purpose of this program is to encourage citizens, through monetary rewards, to anonymously provide tips to the police on solving crimes. Several questions were included in the EVS to test the knowledge of Edmonton residents about the functioning of the Crime Stoppers program.

TABLE 17

Proportion Aware of Crime Prevention Programs by Population and by Victim Status (Edmonton 1982, 1985)

	Population		Non-Victims		Victims	
	1982	1985	1982	1985	1982	1985
Aware of:						
Neighbourhood Watch	64	91	61	90	68	95
Operation Identification	59	65	56	63	65	70
Block Parents	92	94	91	92	95	97
Household Participates in:						
Operation Identification	14	20	13	18	16	22

The number of Edmonton residents who had heard of Crime Stoppers at the time of the survey was an overwhelming 97% (Table 18). Most had first become aware of the program through television (76%) and the remainder through radio (8%), newspaper (8%) or other means (4%). Citizens' understanding of the purpose of the Crime Stoppers program was largely correct: 61% responding that the aim was to help police solve crimes, 49% that it was to provide a way to give anonymous tips for information about crimes, and 7% that the program provided rewards to citizens who help police[4].

The perception of Edmonton residents was that Crime Stoppers is very effective (56%) or moderately effective (32%) in helping police solve crimes; however, 60% could not state how funds are provided for Crime Stoppers. Only one in five correctly responded that the program is funded by a non-governmental community group.

Awareness of the Victim Services Unit

In 1979, the Edmonton Police Department created a special Victim Services Unit to provide direct assistance to victims of crime. In 1984, this unit received an award from the Washington-based National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) as an exemplary police-based victim service unit.

According to the 1985 survey, residents of Edmonton generally did not have a high level of awareness of the Victim Services Unit (Table 19): at the time of the interview only 23% of Edmonton residents had heard of this service, having become aware of the project through the newspapers (30%), television (23%) or friends and relatives (20%). A slightly larger proportion (27%) of

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(4) Percentages do not add to 100 because respondents could state more than one purpose of Crime Stoppers.

TABLE 18

Awareness of "Crime Stoppers" (Edmonton 1985)

Proportion of total who heard of Crime Stoppers 97%

How first became aware:	
television	76
radio	8
newspaper	8
other (includes friends, poster, etc.	4
	100

Perception of Purpose of Crime Stoppers (multiple response):

Help police solve crimes	61
Give anonymous tips to police	49
Prevent crimes	16
Reward citizens who help police	7
Same as Neighbourhood Watch	2
Other	11
Don't know	2

Perception of effectiveness in helping police solve crimes:

Very effective	56
Moderately	32
Not at all	1
Don't know	11
	100

Perception of how Crime Stoppers is funded (multiple response):

Non government (e.g. citizen board)	20%
Government	11
Edmonton Police Department	6
Other	7
Don't know	60

all victims and 31% of victims who reported to the police were aware of the Victim Services Unit and, not surprisingly, the VSU cards were very instrumental in this increased awareness. A recent evaluation study of the VSU also found that about one-third of all victims who had reported their victimization to the police were aware of the Unit. Given that the VSU appears to focus its efforts on assisting victims of property crimes it is not surprising that those who were aware of the VSU tended to be the victims of property crimes (in 70% of all incidents where the victim was aware of the VSU). A surprising finding was that victims actually made use of the VSU in only 3% of reported incidents.

TABLE 19

Awareness of Edmonton Police Department Victim Service Unit (Edmonton 1985)

	Population	All Victims	Victims who Reported to Police
Proportion of total who heard of the Victim Service Unit	23%	27%	31%
How first became aware:			
newspaper	30%	28%	26%
television	22	20	20
friends, relatives	20	19	18
radio	8	7	6
Victim Services Unit card	6	11	16
Other	14	15	14
	100	100	100

APPENDICES

I. TESTING FOR STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

II. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE
DIVISIONAL MAPS

III. SELECTED TABLES SHOWING DIVISIONAL COMPARISONS

APPENDIX I

TESTING FOR STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The test of significance used in this comparison is the T-test, also used in the British Crime Survey. Whereas the BCS used the one-tailed test (they assume an increase in the crime rate will occur), we used the two-tailed test because we believe that an hypothesis of change in crime rates in either direction is more plausible than an hypothesis that rates would remain stable or would rise. Our choice of the two-tailed test results in a much more rigorous measure of significance which therefore should lead to greater confidence in those data which meet our significance requirements. We have chosen the conservative .01 level of significance because of the importance of interpreting changes in the crime rate carefully and accurately.

Table A1 tests the changes in the estimated incidence of the eight crime categories for statistical significance. Here, victimization rate, which measures the number of victims per 1,000, is used rather than incident rate, which measures the number of incidents per 1,000. Since more than one person can be a victim in a violent incident, the victimization rates shown in Table A1 will be higher than the incident rates for these three crime categories in Tables 1 and 1A.

Table A1

Estimated Victimization Rates for Edmonton 1982 and 1984 and Significance of Change

	1982		1985			
	Rate Per 1,000	2 Standard Errors	Rate Per 1,000	2 Standard Errors	Percent Change 1982-1985	
PERSONAL OFFENCES						
Sexual Assault	4.4	±1.5	2.3	±1.0	-48	**
Robbery	10	±2.5	10	±2.3	Nil	NS
Assault	68	±6.7	61	±6.3	-10	NS
Total Violent	82	±7.5	73	±7.3	-11	NS
Personal Theft	72	±6.2	52	±5.0	-28	*
HOUSEHOLD OFFENCES						
Break & Enter	86	±6.6	73	±6.1	-15	*
Motor Vehicle Theft	17	±2.9	15	±2.6	-12	NS
Household Theft	204	±10.8	163	±9.5	-21	*
Vandalism	86	±6.7	66	±5.7	-24	*
Total Household	393	±15.8	317	±12.9	-20	*

* Significant at the .01 level.
** Significant at the .05 level.
NS Not statistically significant.

APPENDIX II

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

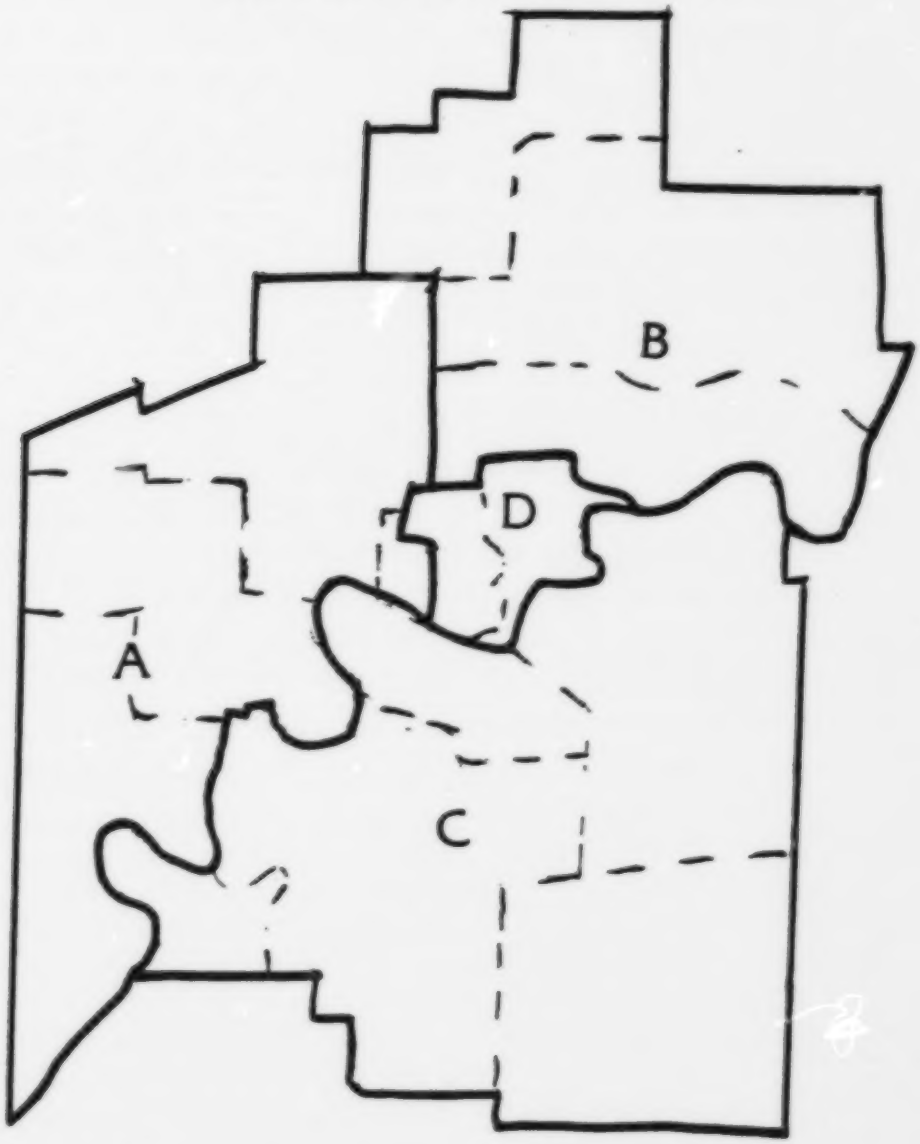
The Divisional data presented in this report should not be considered as a precise picture of the situation in each police Division, but it can be used to provide an indication of the extent of differences between Divisions and to give some direction to changes occurring over the time period of the two surveys. The following itemizes in point form, the major technical factors which should be noted.

- In both surveys (CUVS and EVS) the Division of residence was determined using Edmopnton Telephone Company's switching areas (see attached map I). Although the boundaries for these areas did not change from 1982 to 1985, the boundaries do not precisely match those of the police Divisions (see map II).

- The 1982 survey recorded place of occurrence of offences by census tract (see map III) and police Divisions were approximated by grouping census tracts. In 1985 police "Atoms" were used to code the place of occurrence. The agglomerations of census tracts to reflect police Divisions (see map IV) do not precisely match the Division's boundaries established by aggregating Atoms to Districts and then to Divisions (see map II). Thus any comparisons of the occurrence of crime between Divisions should, at this time, be avoided. These data will be presented in a forthcoming volume of this report.

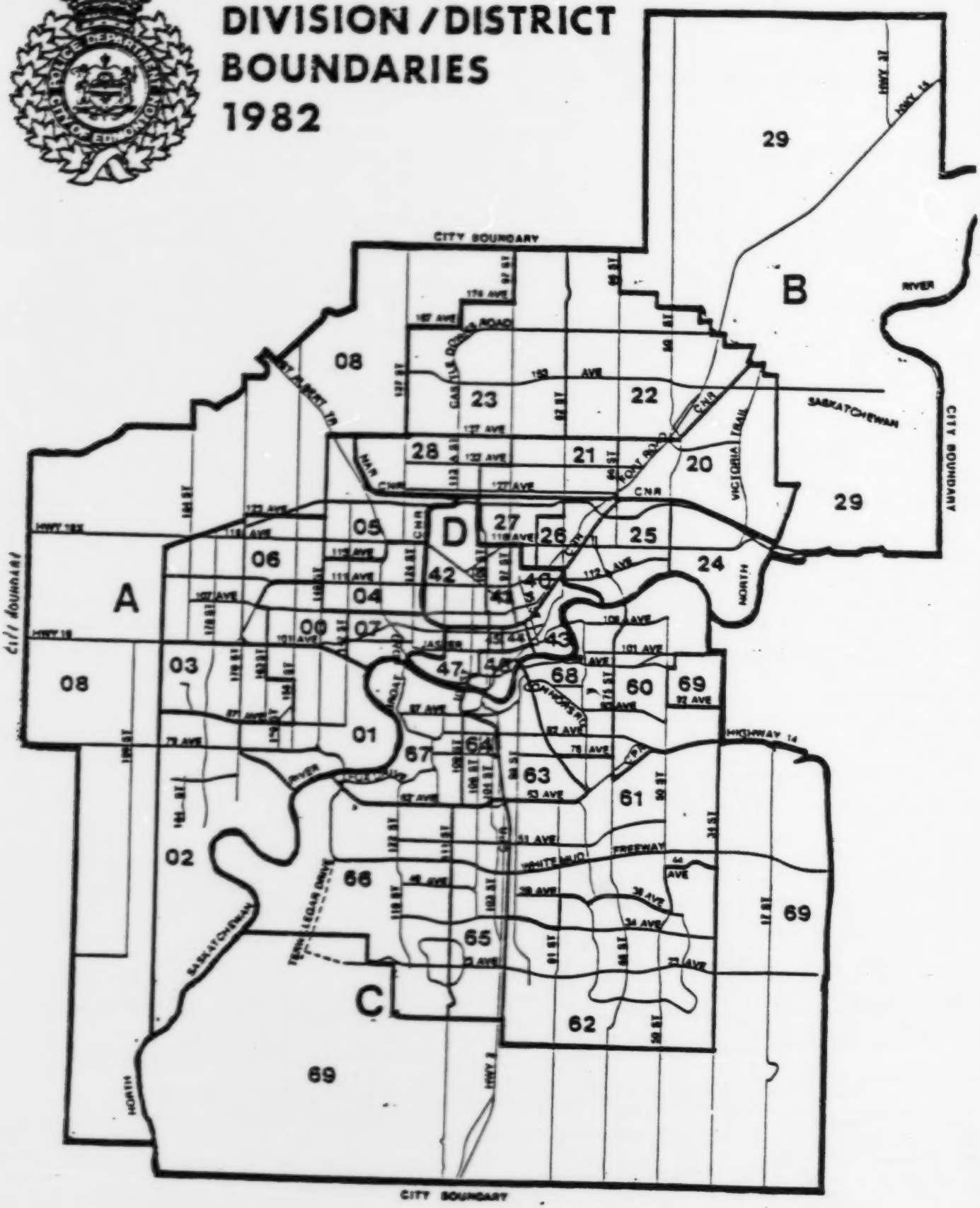
MAP 1

EDMONTON TELEPHONE COMPANY SWITCHING AREAS
POLICE DIVISIONS BY SWITCHING AREA



MAP II

DIVISION / DISTRICT BOUNDARIES 1982



MAP III

EDMONTON 1981 CENSUS TRACTS

MAP IV

POLICE DIVISIONS BY CENSUS TRACTS

APPENDIX III

TABLE A2

Selected Demographic Characteristics of the Edmonton Population Aged 16 and Older

	POLICE DIVISION			
	A	B	C	D
Age (1985)				
16-24	25	26	27	32
25-39	36	40	40	41
40-64	30	28	26	18
65 and over	8	6	6	9
	100	100	100	100
Sex (1985)				
Male	49	51	49	51
Female	51	49	51	49
	100	100	100	100
Marital Status (1985)				
Single	34	30	35	53
Married/Common-law	56	60	57	34
Widowed	4	3	3	3
Separated/Divorced	6	6	5	9
	100	100	100	100
Population Aged 16 and Older				
1982	114,700	109,000	154,800	25,700
1985	117,100	118,300	156,300	23,700
Number of Households				
1982	56,700	51,500	75,100	15,100
1985	60,500	56,400	78,700	14,800

TABLE A3

Perception of the Level of Crime in own Neighourhood by Division of Residence, 1982 and 1985

Amount of Crime	Percent Distribution									
	Edmonton		Police Division A		B		C		D	
	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)
High	7	6	6	6	8	6	4	3	25	18
Average	30	27	32	31	31	30	26	22	33	38
Low	57	60	55	56	55	56	64	69	33	32
Don't Know	6	7	6	6	6	7	6	5	9	11
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

TABLE A4

Perceptions of Crime Trends over past Two years in own Neighbourhood by Police Division of Residence, 1982 and 1985

Crime Change	Edmonton		Percent Distribution Police Division A		B		C		D	
	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)
Increased	31	17	32	17	32	19	29	14	36	19
Decreased	3	9	3	9	4	10	3	9	3	8
Same	51	58	50	58	51	53	52	62	39	51
Don't Know	15	16	14	15	13	17	16	15	22	23
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table A5

Perceptions of Crime Problem in own Neighbourhood by Police Division of Residence, 1982 and 1985

Crime Problem	Percent Distribution									
	Edmonton		Police Division							
			A		B		C		D	
	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)
Serious	13	10	11	11	14	11	10	7	30	22
Not Serious	82	85	84	85	81	82	85	90	62	68
Don't Know	5	5	5	4	4	7	5	3	9	10
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table A6

Perceptions of Neighbourhood Crime Compared to all of Edmonton by Police Division of Residence, 1982 and 1985

Amount of Crime	Edmonton		Percent Distribution Police Division A		B		C		D	
	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)
More(1)	6	6	5	6	6	7	3	3	28	29
Same	23	22	24	25	27	25	19	17	30	26
Less(2)	64	63	64	61	60	57	72	74	30	29
Don't Know	7	8	7	7	6	11	6	6	12	15
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
(1) Combines "much more" and "more" categories.
(2) Combines "much less" and "less" categories.

Table A7

Perceptions of Crime Trends Over Past Two Years in Edmonton by Police Division of Residence, 1982 and 1985

Amount of Crime	Edmonton		Percent Distribution Police Division A		B		C		D	
	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)
Increased	90	56	92	56	91	61	90	52	85	49
Decreased	1*	18	**	20	**	15	1*	20	**	14
Remained the Same	3	16	3	15	3	15	4	17	5	21
Don't Know	5	9	4	8	5	9	5	9	9	15
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

* The actual count was low (11 to 20), therefore caution should be execised when interpreting this percentage.
** The actual count was too low to make statistically reliable population estimates.

Table A8

Feelings of Safety Walking Alone in own Neighbourhood During the Day and After Dark by Police Division of Residence, 1982 and 1985

Feelings of Safety	Edmonton		Percent Distribution Police Division A		B		C		D	
	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)
During the Day										
Safe(1)	96	96	97	96	96	96	98	97	92	91
Unsafe(2)	3	3	3	4	4	4	2	3	7	8
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
After Dark										
Safe(1)	56	61	56	57	55	59	64	66	44	48
Unsafe(2)	44	37	44	43	45	40	36	34	56	52
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
(1) Combines "very safe" and "reasonably safe" categories.
(2) Combines "very unsafe" and "somewhat unsafe" categories.

Table A9

Aspects of Police Performance by Police Division of Residence, 1982 and 1985

What Kind of Job Do You Think the Local Police is Doing:	Percent Distribution									
	Edmonton		Police Division A		B		C		D	
	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)
Enforcing laws										
Good	55	61	56	62	58	63	54	60	48	59
Average	33	29	33	29	31	29	35	30	31	28
Poor	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	10	6
Don't Know	6	5	6	4	5	4	6	6	11	8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Responding Promptly to Calls										
Good	44	47	44	49	48	48	42	44	45	43
Average	20	18	20	18	19	19	20	17	18	22
Poor	10	8	10	9	10	9	9	7	11	8
Don't Know	26	27	27	25	23	24	28	31	26	28
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Being Approachable										
Good	62	65	62	66	64	64	61	64	53	60
Average	18	18	17	18	16	18	19	17	20	19
Poor	6	5	6	5	6	6	5	5	11	6
Don't Know	15	12	15	10	14	12	15	14	16	15
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Supplying Crime Prevention Information										
Good	53	63	53	65	54	63	54	63	40	51
Average	22	19	23	18	20	19	21	19	22	21
Poor	11	6	11	6	10	6	11	5	19	9
Don't Know	14	12	13	11	15	13	13	12	19	19
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table A10

Victim's Perceptions of Police Case Handling by Police Division of Residence, 1982 and 1985

Victim's Rating	Edmonton		Percent Distribution Police Division A		B		C		D	
	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)
Promptness										
Good	71	66	67	67	64	68	66	62	71	67
Average	16	19	21	21	19	20	16	25	10*	13
Poor	13	14	13	11*	17	11	19	13	20	19
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Courtesy										
Good	76	71	76	74	78	72	77	71	69	69
Average	19	24	19	20	18	22	19	25	22	24
Poor	5	5	5*	6*	5	6*	4	4*	9*	7*
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Keeping Victim Informed										
Good	53	50	50	47	48	48	50	47	47	55
Average	23	19	24	17	26	21	24	19	26	18
Poor	24	31	27	36	26	29	26	33	27	27
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Overall Case Handling										
Good	63	58	57	55	57	59	55	58	53	58
Average	23	25	25	27	26	28	29	29	29	23
Poor	15	16	17	18	17	13	16	13	18	18
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

* The actual count was low (11 to 20), therefore caution should be exercised when interpreting this proportion.

Table A11

Proportion of Residents Aware of Crime Prevention Programs by Division of Residence, 1982 and 1985

Crime Prevention Programs	Edmonton		Percent Distribution Police Division A		B		C		D	
	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)	(1982)	(1985)
Awareness of:										
Neighbourhood Watch	64	91	65	92	62	90	66	93	54	79
Operation Identification	59	65	60	67	56	65	62	67	46	48
Block Parents	92	94	94	95	92	94	94	95	81	82
Participate in:										
Operation Identification	14	20	13	19	13	19	17	21	6	11

Table A12

Proportion of Residents Aware of Crime Stoppers and the Victim Service Unit by Division of Residence, 1985

Awareness of:	EDMONTON 1985	POLICE DIVISION A	B	C	D
Crime Stoppers	97	98	97	97	90
Victim Service Unit	23	24	23	24	19